

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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SUBJECT: 1977 CROP SURVEY METHODS

REF: MOSCOW 3248

1. AGATT OFFICE AUTO TRAVEL WILL CONTINUE PREVIOUS YEARS' METHODOLOGY OF RECORDING CONDITIONS ALONG A 10 KILOMETER STRETCH EVERY 50 KILOMETERS. WHERE THE ORIGINAL 10 KILOMETERS HAVE BEEN DISTURBED BY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OR OTHER NON-AGRICULTURAL USES, APPROPRIATE ADJACENT AREAS WILL BE ADDED TO MAINTAIN SAMPLE SIZE AS HAS, IN EFFECT, BEEN DONE IN THE PAST. (WHILE THIS MAXIMIZES CROPLAND COVERAGE, IT OF COURSE REPRESENTS A FURTHER DEPARTURE FROM RANDOMNESS OF ORIGINAL SAMPLE.)

2. IN RECORDING OBSERVATIONS WE WILL ATTEMPT ON A TRIAL BASIS TO USE THE LACIE GROUND TRUTH PERIODIC OBSERVATION FORM (GTPOF) CODING TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE. OUR INTENTION IS TO PHYSICALLY ENTER ONE FIELD IN EACH SAMPLED RUN, AND COMPLETE THE ENTIRE FORM. SUCH FIELDS WILL BE SELECTED IN A MANNER FACILITATING LANDSAT IDENTIFICATION,
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I.E., NEAR PROMINENT NATURAL OR MAN-MADE SURFACE FEATURES. THE SAME SITES WILL BE USED THROUGHOUT THE SEASON AND IN FUTURE YEARS, IF POSSIBLE. FOR FIELDS OBSERVED FROM THE ROAD, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO CODE THREE TYPES OF INFORMATION: (A) LAND USE (USING A COMBINATION OF LAND USE AND FIELD OPERATION CODES FOUND IN GTPOF); (B) STAGE OF PLANT DEVELOPMENT; AND (C) CONDITION OF STAND. COMMENTS ON WEED GROWTH

AND YIELD DETRACTANTS WILL ALSO BE RECORDED AS APPROPRIATE.

3. AS HIGHWAY OBSERVATIONS FREQUENTLY LACK PRECISION DUE TO TREE SCREENS, GROUND SPEED, GRAY SKIES, ETC., OUR CODING OF LAND USE, PLANT DEVELOPMENT AND STAND WILL NOT EMPLOY THE DETAIL AVAILABLE ON THE GTPOF. THUS IN LAND USE/FIELD OPERATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, WE WILL NOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN BARE PLOWED (03) AND BARESEEDED (04). ALL NAKED EARTH WILL SIMPLY BE CODED (01); ALL STUBBLE (05); AND ALL ON-GOING HARVESTING (11). SIMILARLY, GROWTH STAGE CODING WILL BE ABBREVIATED, BUT IN A MANNER COMPATIBLE WITH THE GTPOF SYSTEM.

4. REGARDING CROP PHOTOS, WE CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT WRITTEN DESCRIPTIONS, PLUS OUR CODED ROUTE NOTES, CAN ADEQUATELY SUMMARIZE THE OVERALL SITUATION. HOWEVER, IN CASES OF DISEASE OR INSECT DAMAGE, OR OTHER YIELD DETRACTANTS NOT IDENTIFIABLE BY REPORTING OFFICERS, PHOTOS WILL BE TAKEN.

5. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CLOSE-UP SITES, CODE USE, AS WELL AS TRIP NOTES WILL BE POUCHED FIRST WEEK OF MAY FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THIRD LEG OF SPRING TRAVEL. WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING SCHEDULE OF LANDSAT COVERAGE OF SPECIFIC SITES IN SOVIET WINTER GRAIN AREAS. REQUEST GUIDANCE ON OTHER GROUND ACTIVITIES HELPFUL TO LACIE PROGRAM.

6. TO REPEAT, ALTHOUGH ABOVE PROCEDURES REPRESENT OUR BEST INTENTIONS, ACTUAL FIELD CONDITIONS WILL PROBABLY FREQUENTLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PREVENT COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION. HEDGE AND TREE ROWS OFTEN PREVENT GOOD VIEW OF EACH FIELD, AND IT IS NOT EVEN POSSIBLE TO ENTER ALL FIELDS ON FOOT FROM THE ROAD. ALSO, KGB COVER IS WITH US AT ALL TIMES. LAST YEAR, THEY DID NOT PREVENT US FROM ENTERING FIELDS, BUT IT IS TECHNICALLY AGAINST SOVIET LAW AND THEY HAVE IN THE PAST DONE SO. PHOTOGRAPHY IS ALSO ALWAYS RISKY. WE WILL, THEREFORE, DO THE BEST JOB WE CAN, AMONG OTHER THINGS ATTEMPTING NOT TO JEOPARDIZE OUR PRESENT TRAVEL PATTERNS AND AUTHORIZATIONS.
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